

EDUCATION AND YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Standards and Quality Report

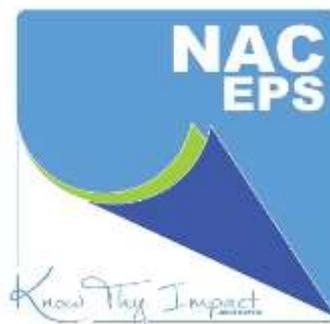
2017

BUILDING
BRIGHT
FUTURES

Educational Psychology Service



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath





North Ayrshire Council

Education & Youth Employment: Standards & Quality Report

Establishment:

Educational Psychology Service

Session:

2016-2017



Our Service:

North Ayrshire Educational Psychological Service is embedded within the Education and Youth Employment Directorate and is based in Cunninghame House. The service has five core functions (consultation, assessment, intervention, research and training) and works at the varying levels of the child and family, school/ establishment and whole authority.

Staffing currently consists of 10.4 educational psychologists; Principal Psychologist, Depute Principal Psychologist, Senior Psychologist and 7.4 main grade educational psychologists. Additionally, the service is heavily involved in supporting aspects of the attainment challenge across different work streams. Through this, the service has funding for 1.5 additional educational psychologist, 1.0 research assistant and one psychological assistant. The service was not fully staffed during session 2016-2017.

The Psychological Service is a statutory part of North Ayrshire Council's Education & Youth Employment. Educational Psychologists work in partnership with others, use their knowledge of psychology, learning and education to help create conditions whereby children and young people benefit from educational provision, and their quality of life is improved. To this end the service:

- supports in the identification of additional support needs
- works in partnership with the key adults involved with children to bring about positive change
- raises awareness and understanding of the impact of the challenges children experience
- consults, advises and builds capacity in partnership with others
- carries out research and evaluations to help develop services for children
- applies positive psychology, enabling identification of solutions

A rigorous, partnership approach to self-evaluation for self-improvement is embedded within the service. We use a range of effective approaches to ensure active involvement by all staff, partners, learners and parents. These include; stakeholder feedback/reference groups, parent and young person feedback, termly peer support and challenge dialogue, evaluation of impact discussions, staff surveys and termly SMT one to one discussions. As all psychologists within the service are regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) there is also an annual staff professional review and development system based on the HCPC standards, and reflective practice is promoted through the termly peer support and challenge systems.

This SQR reflects our progress in terms of actions identified from our Validated Self Evaluation in May 2016. Our SQR demonstrates our progress, impact and evidence available across our five key priorities.

Our Values:



How successful has the service been at improving excellence and equity?

Service Priority 1:

Build capacity for an equal and inclusive culture and practice across school communities

National Improvement Framework Priority/Priorities

- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

How Good is Our School? (version 4) Quality Indicator

- 2.7 Partnerships
- 3.1 Ensuring Wellbeing, equality and inclusion
- 3.3 Increasing creativity and employability

Progress, impact and evidence:

As a result of our approach to supporting the co-ordination of an ongoing tiered training programme for autism, we are contributing to improving outcomes for all children and young people with autism by building staff capacity to meet need. This training was delivered by a multi-agency group of staff and parents with specific expertise regarding supporting children with social & communication needs. This is available for all education staff across early years, primary and secondary establishments. The numbers of staff in each educational establishment (particularly early years and primary) has significantly increased, with around one hundred members of staff attending training sessions last year. Almost all staff who attended the training evaluated this input as positive and in having a contribution to behaviour change in the classroom/school context. In order to improve this, it has been identified that the training should be over several sessions with a task in-between and evaluations should be repeated 6 months after training input to evaluate if behaviour change is ongoing.

The service contributed to the High Tariff / UCAS authority day by providing an input to large numbers of pupils on interviewing skills. Almost all children and young people evaluated this positively. It was identified however, that of those attending the input only ½ were required to attend an interview to access their course. Through ongoing self-evaluation and in line with our validated self-evaluation process, it has been agreed that the EPS will no longer be involved with this event. It was analysed as being a large amount of EP time in relation to the anticipated impact and outcomes and that EP time would be more impactful if service time was spent on more vulnerable young people. A clear exit strategy was put in place and the contribution of the EPs will now be taken forward by another agency. However, the service continues to be involved in a wide range of work to support children and young people into positive post school destinations, through consultation at school and authority level, and specific involvement at individual level with many of our most vulnerable learners. This support contributes to the positive performance for Education and Youth Employment in terms of securing positive destinations for school leavers, including vulnerable groups, for example Looked After Children, where 80% secure a positive destination, which is higher than the National Average.

Collaborative work with our partners in the PLA has resulted in joint training and ongoing coaching to probationer teachers in applying a **practitioner enquiry (PE)** approach to their practice. This approach encouraged our new teachers to engage in critically informed reflective practice that allowed them to consider the context and basis of why they were doing what they are doing. All probationers were then able to showcase their enquires and discuss the strengths and challenges of the process in informing good quality learning and teaching approaches.

The service has contributed to strategic decision making and the development of policy and practice relating to Inclusion in the following ways: collaborative review of Pre-Scat arrangement and replacing the RAMG with the Inclusion Group, consultative involvement in the Children and Young Person's Service Review Board, review of Nurture Base Support, and the development of to ensure best future delivery of services via the CYPSB various and Inclusion Strategy paper, and Inclusion Process paper, and involvement in a review of Hayocks and St. Mark's Support Bases. This has supported the development of clear action plans for a range of services, and a greater focus on Inclusive Practice within the authority. The changes are still being evaluated, and further early years service delivery changes are planned for the next session for partnership nurseries. Overall, North Ayrshire is using much fewer purchased day placements than previously but it is recognised through a range of data sources that more work on nurturing approaches is required.

The authority has a substantial commitment to promoting an inclusive approach through our work on promoting positive relationships, which is noted in more detail under service priority 4.

Next Steps:

- *Ongoing multi-agency planning and delivery of Autism training, in collaboration with senior manager (E & YE), to support the effective implementation and longitudinal evaluation of school staff's increased knowledge and ability to support children and young people with Autism within their school establishment."*
- *The service will, in collaboration with partners, develop a new process for meeting the needs of partnership nurseries, supporting early consultation and Inclusion across this sector*
- Reconfigure service delivery to ensure provision for vulnerable groups, i.e., service to children's units, NA's nurture bases and out with authority placements (*Priority 1*)
- A group of EPs will be involved in Video Enhanced Reflective Practice which will count towards part of VIG accreditation. This will contribute towards develop positive relationships, increased attunement and greater reflective skills for all participants (*Priority 2*)

How successful has the service been at improving excellence and equity?

Service Priority 2:

High quality learning and teaching is taking place in all our education establishments

National Improvement Framework Priority

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

How Good is Our School? (version 4) Quality Indicator

- 2.7 Partnerships
- 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment
- 3.2 Raising attainment and achievement

How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare? Quality Indicator

- 3.2 Securing children's progress

Progress, impact and evidence:

Over the last year the service has developed good relationships with our partners in the PLA. We have engaged in joint planning and evaluations of shared projects, as well as creating opportunities for reflection, sharing of skills, knowledge and experiences and taking part in joint professional learning opportunities. Ongoing reflection and dialogue would suggest that we still need to develop a more focused joint plan, with more clearly defined goals, objectives and time scales to maximise the breadth potential of joint working.

The service has drawn upon the 'visible learning' research to support approaches to learning and teaching within North Ayrshire. Key principles have helped to inform the authorities draft Effective Learning and Teaching Policy as well as the authority's Dyslexia Policy. A short life working group was also convened and lead by the EPS this year to look at how visible learning is being taken forward across the authority. This involved a number of schools who were already applying visible learning principles within their school context to share good practice, challenges of implementation and to forward plan collaboratively. It was agreed that the EPS would have an ongoing role to play in supporting schools in taking forward the key principles of visible learning.

Furthermore, the service has developed and delivered training to probationer teachers on key aspects of learning and teaching, including differentiation. Inputs were evaluated positively with probationer teachers reporting increased knowledge and confidence. Although the service recognises the challenge in gathering the longer term impact these inputs will have on children and young people's attainment, it is widely recognised that teachers who are confident and skilled in the above aspects on learning and teaching will have a greater impact on pupil's experiences and engagement in their learning.

A number of briefing papers for practitioners have been developed by the EPS in collaboration with partners which focus on key aspects on high quality learning and teaching approaches. One paper in particular, which focused on 'setting' informed robust dialogue at a whole-authority Head-

teacher meeting, and has led to a number of schools re-evaluating how they set classes and differentiate learning for pupils. We have developed a twitter feed and have used this within North Ayrshire and beyond to stimulate debate on learning and teaching, and other areas with an increasing number of followers.

The EPS over the last year has supported one EP to undertake a Doctorate in Educational Psychology, which involved the investigation of effective reading comprehension approaches for children. After initial analysis of theoretical models of reading, strategy use and potential interventions, the **Strathclyde Higher Order Reading Skills (SHORS)** approach was identified as the preferable reading comprehension intervention on the basis of effect size, implementation cost, universality and accessibility. After a promising pilot a main study took place with Primary 5 children. Training was given to teachers and the SHORS methodology was implemented for 8 weeks within normal lessons. The project yielded excellent results, with pre and post evaluative measures demonstrating statistically significant positive results with a large effect size of 0.81. Furthermore, pupil feedback from the intervention revealed a greater increase in the recognition and use of metacognitive strategies and in reading more frequently at home. The intervention also indicated equal benefits to low/average/high ability children. It therefore appears to be a 'universal' intervention which can raise attainment for all. It will feed into the National Improvement Hub managed by Education Scotland.

The service has helped lead the development of the dyslexia and literacy difficulties assessment policy to give clearer and more detailed guidance on the assessment of literacy difficulties and dyslexia and link to effective intervention. This has been shared with all headteachers and work at cluster level has started. Cluster feedback and feedback at school level had indicated increased confidence and understanding, but more work is needed to embed this across the next session. It is anticipated that this will lead to improvement in processes and learning experiences of all learners.

Next Steps:

- The EPS will lead in embedding the Dyslexia policy into practice across North Ayrshire's education establishments
- The EPS will work in partnership with the Professional Learning Academy to take the SHORS approach forward across all schools within the authority.
- The EPS will contribute to the further development of learning and teaching approaches in North Ayrshire through providing consultation and evidence informed advice to teaching and learning group/ change board
- The service will continue to work in collaboration with our education establishments to enhance the quality of learning and teaching approaches for all North Ayrshire's child, utilising current evidence based practice to inform practice.
- The service will continue to have strong links with our partners in the Professional Learning Academy in driving forward dynamic and evidence based learning and teaching approaches within North Ayrshire, and to create a programme of joint work.

How successful has the service been at improving excellence and equity?

Service Priority 3:

Enhance the well-being of children and young people

National Improvement Framework Priority

- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

How Good is Our School? (version 4) Quality Indicator

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare? Quality Indicator

3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

Progress, impact and evidence:

Enhancing the well-being of children and young people is recognised as an increasing challenge both locally and nationally. The service has responded to this challenge through the implementation of a number of strength based psychologically informed interventions, including 'Scottish mental Health First Aid', 'Change and Loss' and 'Sleep'.

Approximately fifty members of secondary school staff have been trained in **Scottish Mental Health First Aid** in the year 2016-2017. Repeated narrative / informal evidence and formal evaluations via questionnaire suggest an increased confidence and understanding of; mental health issues in young people, how to ask a young person about a mental health problem if they suspect they may have one and in providing initial support and guidance towards appropriate help if needed. The service has delivered the training course jointly with guidance staff and provided support to build capacity within staff in schools to be the co-ordinator and push this forward. Some of SMHFA courses delivered in 2016-2017 were as part of the 'Future Kid' project within Kilwinning, Irvine and Greenwood clusters.

The EPS has continued to deliver training to support staff in a number of secondary schools using materials from the **Sound Sleep** curriculum pack. With support from the EPS each participating school implemented the project as part of 'Mentoring' programmes, 'Achievement Groups' and study skills input. In addition to this around 80 sixth year pupils took part in a one off 50-minute introductory session as part of a Health and Wellbeing day. Parents were also involved in information sessions. Teachers reported that the materials were informative and interesting and included good facts that were clearly explained and that the information given was very relevant to the young people. Some teachers felt home and school links were enhanced. All pupils understood why it is important to develop good sleeping habits. Pupils that managed to increase their sleep said they would continue to keep good sleeping habits. Parents reported that they felt more able to support their children with better routines at home. Parents said it provided a vehicle for discussing issues around late night internet use, texting and watching television in the bedroom. Schools now have the materials and knowledge to develop their own programmes and many have now embedded the approach as part of PSE.

The '**Change and Loss**' intervention has continued to be rolled out within North Ayrshire this year, with an additional focus of change and loss being a 2nd tier of training for those that have the authority nurture input. As such, training has now been delivered to all primary nurture base staff and further training is planned for all secondary nurture base staff. As a result of ongoing evaluations of the intervention, materials have been updated this year and the training input has been revised to incorporate the latest research around resilience and promoting positive well-being. Probationer teachers were involved in an awareness raising session in November 2016 where almost all evaluations stated that they valued time for discussion around change and loss and tips for supporting children and young people in their classrooms. A key theme from the evaluations stated that they would use strategies discussed in their daily practice. Both staff in residential children's homes and staff from the primary nurture bases received input, where 23/24 stated the training was extremely useful in developing their knowledge and understanding and use of this in practice.

The service has developed an implementation and research framework for the secondary counselling project as part of the attainment challenge and worked with 2 schools to ensure they are "counsellor ready". As a result of this, 2 counsellors are already in place and supporting children and young people, and working towards a clear framework with a clear evaluation plan.

Next Steps:

- Ongoing partnership approach to the implementation of strength based psychologically informed interventions (SMHFA / Change and Loss / Sleep)
- Change and loss materials have been updated in line with feedback from primary nurture staff and this will be re-launched as part of a tiered approach to 'Nurture in North Ayrshire' in Term 1 2017
- Termly staged intervention meetings with clusters of partnership and voluntary early year's establishments, alongside a member of the early learning and childcare team in order to support the inclusion process, TACs, identification and assessment of ASN
- Support ongoing implementation and evaluation of secondary counselling project.
- Develop, enhance and evaluate our own wellbeing interventions including solution oriented, motivation interviewing and DDP based approaches
- Language of learning / resilience project with FLA/ PLA and CAMHS teachers

How successful has the service been at improving excellence and equity?

Service Priority 4:

Foster an ethos where positive relationships are the foundation for practice

National Improvement Framework Priority

- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

How Good is Our School? (version 4) Quality Indicator

- 2.4 Personalised support
- 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

How Good is Our Early Learning and Childcare? Quality Indicator

- 2.4 Personalised support
- 3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion

Progress, impact and evidence:

Educational Psychology service continues to be a member of the promoting positive relationships steering group, allowing the service to contribute to a strategic approach and coherent authority view of how nurture and restorative approaches should be taken forward in North Ayrshire.

The service has delivered, in collaboration with partners, initial 2 day training to 3 staff from every primary school in the authority to support whole school nurturing approaches. The initial impact of this training has been evaluated positively, via initial questionnaire. Follow up support work to embed this with all staff is underway. Service staff also were involved in the joint delivery of 4 day training alongside Education Scotland staff to a target group of 4/5 primaries and their early years classes.

The service has co-ordinated the evaluation of the Scottish Attainment Challenge targeted nurturing primary provision for 15 schools and contributed to the ongoing effective implementation of nurture across these groups, via supporting the development of a quality assurance framework and contributing to the nurture quality assurance visits across the school year. The good progression of the targeted nurture provision, and the positive impact for young people and families has been noted by the Scottish Government and Education Scotland. The Attainment Challenge half and full year reports detail the success of approach for the young people targeted more fully. Additionally, collaborative work with the nurture co-ordinator has supported the ongoing skills development of the 30 nurture primary staff, for example through developing professional learning to support understanding of self-regulation.

At the secondary stage, the service had delivered 4 day training to 14 newly appointed nurture group staff in secondary schools plus one other representative from each of the 7 secondary schools. The service has led the development of secondary guidelines to guide implementation, meaning all secondary schools have a clear model to work to. The service has continued to support the development of universal nurturing

approaches across our secondary state. This has been done via link EPs following up with ASN co-ordinators and HTs regarding further training for staff in secondary schools. The service has helped co-author a journal article on whole authority wide nurturing approaches, contributing to the national evidence base. The service has contributed at national level through work with Education Scotland to the development of the applied nurture framework, and the 4 day primary nurture materials development.

Ongoing linking between EPS, **early year's co-ordinator** and senior manager has taken place over the year. This partnership has identified that nurturing approaches is currently the biggest priority within early years and as such a significant amount of training has taken place. The service has commenced work on nurture in the early years sector by training all five early years centre managers, and all of the early learning childcare team, ensuring there is good understanding of nurture and enhancing the capacity of a core team to deliver over the next session. The evaluations from this training were excellent. Every North Ayrshire early years establishment will have had at least one member of staff trained in nurturing approaches. This partnership approach to training will develop and continue next session, with a particular focus on the private and voluntary early year's establishments.

The service has continued to lead the development and delivery of restorative approaches in North Ayrshire. All primary and secondary schools have had representation at a two day "training for trainers" and half day recall. Post training evaluations showed staff reported increased skills and understanding of all the significant proponents of RA and could identify next steps within their context.

All schools have been offered whole school restorative awareness sessions. All schools have accessed this with a few exceptions of which will be followed up next year. Post training evaluations showed the sessions were best when co-facilitated and in part (rather than whole) cluster groups. Generally evaluations were positive with school next steps identified. Three school groups have accessed further opportunities in terms of conversations and are as a result more progressed in terms of implementation. Awareness raising activities have been undertaken with probationer teachers and with the professional learning academy. A small group of practitioners accessed Practitioner Enquiry sessions to embed RA. A survey monkey showed this was deemed very beneficial but difficult to access due to competing priorities. An awareness raising session was developed for parents and was piloted and evaluated positively at the end of the session. The materials have been distributed to schools who will contact the Family Learning Team link to help support their presentations to parents. Videos have been produced showing examples of the restorative process and these have been made accessible to schools for their within school follow up sessions. Parent leaflets have been developed in partnership with school staff, children, Family Learning Team and parents. Additionally, an article for the Educational and Child Psychology journal 35(2) on 'What impact has the Educational Psychology Service had on the development of restorative approaches in our schools?' is currently in final draft form.

Feedback from our staff (EVA) survey on the impact of promoting positive relationships, albeit on a smaller sample population than the original survey, involved over 600 staff. Staff who completed the questionnaire are more likely to report that they have had nurture and restorative training, and are more likely to report strong agreement that they know how to apply the principles in their class and establishment. Staff are more likely to say they strongly agree they have holistic understanding of pupils needs, promote the resilience of children and young people and ensure consistent caring relationships. Additionally, they are more likely to say they strongly agree they are able to use effective communication to de-escalate, and more likely to say they agree that pupil-pupil, teacher-teacher, and teacher-parent relationships are positive in their establishment. They are more likely to strongly agree that all behaviour is communication and that their establishment is nurturing. Overall agreement rates across many domains are similar in terms of percentages in agree and strongly agree, but with the trend for strongly agree to increase. Practitioners report numerous examples of impact in their individual practice and at whole class and whole level, in terms of nurture and restorative practice.

Next Steps:

- The service will finalise development of our own 4 day training for targeted primary nurture in collaboration with nurture co-ordinator
- The service will co-deliver this training to support the new attainment challenge primaries (5) and any PEF funded nurture groups
- The service will, in partnership with others, lead the development of de-escalation training and work with others to review the physical intervention policy
- The service will contribute to the ongoing training, quality assurance and implementation of whole school approaches to secondary nurture and to the nurture bases
- The service will work to ensure that all staff in North Ayrshire have had training in and fully understand nurturing and restorative approaches
- The service will work with Respect Me within an authority wide group to improve our anti-bullying policy, making appropriate links with restorative and nurturing approaches.
- The service will develop more in depth professional learning in RA to support schools to develop approaches to reducing exclusion

How successful has the service been at improving excellence and equity?

Service Priority 5:

Embed self-evaluation and performance improvement throughout our service delivery

National Improvement Framework Priority

- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

How Good is Our School? (version 4) Quality Indicator

1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement

Progress, impact and evidence:

Within the service self-evaluation has become an integral aspect of the whole team's approach to continuous improvement. It has become embedded throughout our service delivery via the use of a range of approaches, which are clearly set out in our self-evaluation calendar, to ensure the widest spread of involvement of staff and stakeholders. We can evidence that reflection is a key part of our ongoing self-evaluation and is widely supported both formally and informally. Within our service we engage regularly in effective improvement/development days where all staff within the service lead and contribute and have a clear focus on priorities based on previous analysis of information and evidence gathered.

Particularly over the last year we have clarified and developed a shared understanding of our vision, values and aims and our strengths and improvement needs with regard to specific areas of practice. All actions from our validated self-evaluation have been actioned over the last year and we will continue to use information gathered to inform and improve future service delivery.

Pupil and parent feedback has always been a strong feature of our approach however this will be further developed and improved next year.

Since our validated self-evaluation we can evidence that we have continued to consult with head teachers (termly head teacher focus groups) and believe this to be effective in gathering their views which subsequently informs change and self-improvement within the service. We have continued

to make minor adjustments to the self-evaluation calendar, for instance in the last session we introduced support and challenge 1:1 and this will now form part of our calendar on an ongoing basis. We have a clear plan in place for 2017-2018.

Next Steps:

- The service will work with partners such as young people, parents and other psychological services to develop a more robust, efficient and effective method of gathering parent and young person feedback on the performance of the service.
- We will continue to analyse and evaluate intelligence and data gathered from continuous self-improvement activities to inform future service delivery and to maintain our embedded and collaborative approaches to self-improvement procedures.

What is our capacity for continuous improvement?

Quality Indicator	Service Evaluation
1.1 Self-evaluation for self-improvement	4
2.7 Partnerships	4
3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	5

Overall Capacity For Improvement – strengths and next steps

Please provide a concluding evaluative statement of the service's capacity for continuous improvement, giving a few examples of strengths or good practice and identifying what high level themes you will be working on in the year ahead.

Strengths:

- The service has an embedded and robust approach to self-evaluation, which has informed a shared understanding of our strengths and areas for improvement.
- The service has developed effective leadership capacity across the service to lead change in the authority.
- The service has strengthened its strategic role through effective working within education, especially relating to our role in supporting Promoting Positive Relationships and wellbeing.

Next Steps:

- To continue to work to secure effective relationships and partnerships with health and social care colleagues to support the best outcomes for vulnerable groups- for example in children's units, and our service delivery in foster and adoption.
- To continue to develop our role in supporting effective learning and teaching in the authority.
- To continue to embed and extend PPR and wellbeing work.
- To develop operationalise proposed changes to parental feedback.
- To continue to develop service model to partnership nurseries.